


CONSTRUCTION, CONSTRUCTION... WHAT'S YOUR FUNCTION?



In many fast-growing counties, many folks may even mistakenly believe that the visible construction industry is the largest employer. Not true. But, as with most economic factors, when we look outside the Wasatch Front, a wide variety abounds.

Let's Share. . .

Construction's employment share in the Wasatch Front counties clumps in a tight little range. As a percentage of total

nonfarm employment, construction accounts for roughly 6 to 8 percent of employment in Salt Lake, Davis, Weber, and Utah counties. But, take a step outside the Front and the spread widens from 3 percent to 20 percent. On average, counties "off the Front" show higher shares of construction employment—almost 8 percent as opposed to about 6 percent for Wasatch Front counties.

High Population Growth Equals a Strong Construction Industry


During 2004, counties at the top of construction employment-share heap included Morgan, Washington, Wasatch and Juab counties. Not surprisingly, in 2004, Morgan, Wasatch, and Washington counties also ranked among the top five counties for population (percent) growth. When lots of folks move to your county, somebody's got to build places for them to live. Juab County didn't fit that particular mold. However, the construction of the Current Creek Power Plant brought an influx of construction workers to the area in 2004.

Slower Going. . .

On the other end of the spectrum, slow-growing counties tended to show small portions of construction employment. In Millard, Carbon, Garfield and Beaver counties, the construction industry provided just 4 percent or less of total

nonfarm employment. And, Millard, Carbon, and Beaver counties ranked among the five counties with the slowest-growing populations in the state during 2004. While Garfield County's population growth proved quite moderate, the county's heavy dependence on tourism employment skews the industry distribution.

The Wage Issue

A reputation for high-paying employment has attached itself to the construction industry. Is this true for less urbanized counties? Not necessarily. Although hourly wages may appear higher than average, the seasonal and job-to-job nature of construction nudges annual and monthly figures down. Of 26 "off the Front" counties, 11 showed lower monthly wages in construction than the county average. 

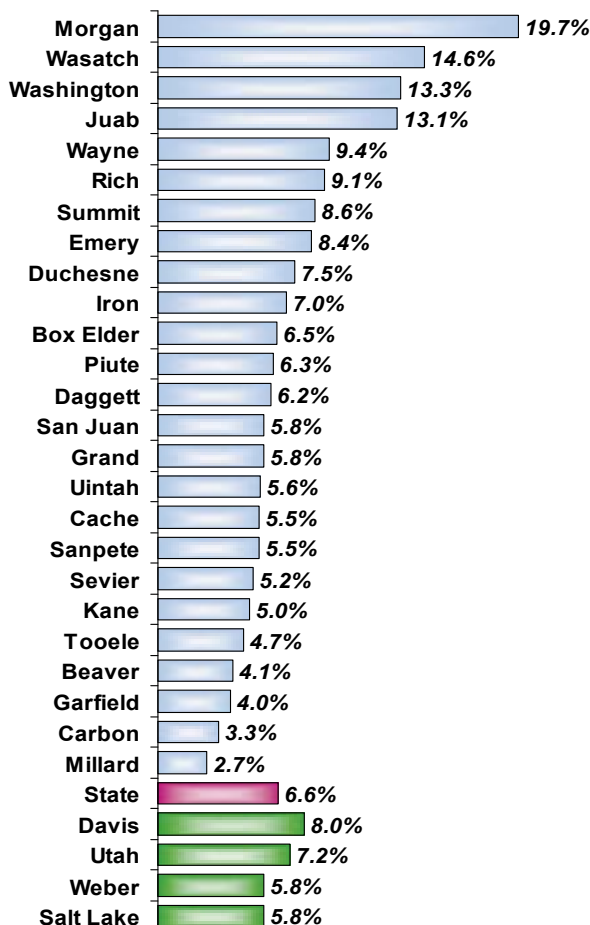
For more information see: <http://jobs.utah.gov/jsp/wi/utalmis/gotoCounties.do>

did you know?

- Building is set to begin in Cedar City on Henley Manor, an Elizabethan resort. The multi-million dollar project will be on a time-lease basis. *The Spectrum*
- In Kanab, construction is underway on a new 80,000-square-foot Stampin' Up! manufacturing facility. *The Salt Lake Tribune*
- The Legislature approved another 192-bed, \$20-million expansion at the Central Utah Correctional Facility in Gunnison. *The Sanpete Messenger*
- Kohl's Department Stores has opened its new location in Washington, Washington County, and will create approximately 150 jobs in the area. *The Deseret Morning News*



**2004 Construction Employment
As a Share of Total Nonfarm Employment**



Source: Utah Department of Workforce Services.